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HERE IS YOUR WAR

For the members of the 100th Bombardment Squadron (M) On Y-J Day this brief historical resume is presented as a record of your participation in World War II.

To fill in the background of your squadron, here is a summary of information for those who are unfamiliar with its long history.:

Originally the 106th Observation Squadron was organized at Kelly Field, Texas, August 27, 1917. It went overseas in December 1917, and though not participating in combat, it earned credit for service in France. After the war, the flights not debilitated were combined with the elements of the 135th Aero Squadron (Obsn.), whose origination was at about the same time in August 1917, at Rockwell Field, San Diego, California. This 135th was the original "Liberty Squadron" to take the front during World War I.

Through peace time years there were many redesignations of the National Guard Unit and at the beginning of World War II it was the 106th Observation Squadron of the Alabama National Guard, with its station at Birmingham, Alabama. In addition to the training functions of this period, it participated in extensive aerial photography of Alabama, pioneered early air mail demonstrations flights, and was highly commended for a two week period of Alabama flood relief duty in March 1929.

On November 25, 1940, the Squadron was inducted into Federal Service and then began its extensive World War II history. Prewar days were high lighted by the participation in the Louisiana and North Carolina maneuvers, such as they were.

One week after the infamous Pearl Harbor attack, the Squadron was at Miami for coastal patrol missions which were conducted until the 1st of September 1942. From Miami, Jacksonville and Savannah, the Squadron during this period flew some 5,000 hours of patrol duty, flying O-47 airplanes in the search for enemy submarines and shipping in distress. Those early days were hazardous, submarines had taken a considerable toll, and of this great total of flying time only one plane and its crew was lost.

From this tour of duty and excellent background the Squadron was sent on the Tennessee maneuvers to train combat crews in Tactical Air Support functions. There was participation in the maneuvers of the fall of 1942 and spring of 1943, and sandwiched in between the Squadron was stationed at Fort Meyers, Florida, where it maintained and trained the four flight echelons of the Squadrons in the 66th Observation Group.

During the spring maneuvers of 1943 the Squadron was reorganized to use henceforth only the B-25 "Billy Mitchell" Bomber. After the maneuvers the Squadron was sent to Chatham Field at Savannah, Georgia to begin its final training for overseas duty. On October 1, 1943, the Squadron was alerted, departing on the first cross-country stage October 15, 1943. The Ground Echelon left Frisco on the 26th of October 1943 eventually disembarking at Guadalcanal on November 15, 1943. The Flight Echelon was slower in arriving but by the new year of 1944 the Squadron was intact again and ready for the "Road to Tokyo". At this period it was designated as the 106th Reconnaissance Squadron (Bombardment).

Such then was the background of the 100th as it started its Air Offensive against the Japanese. The first mission was staged from the Russell Islands on 30 January 1944, against the soon-to-be demoralized Rabaul. The Ground Echelon had in the meantime sent a forward Echelon to Stirling Island in the Treasury Group to ready a camp site for the arrival of the main body by LST on 25 January 1944. The Flight Echelon moved in at the start of February. The setting up of a camp on this small coral island was made further hazardous by the still potent Jap Air Force. The daily medium bombing missions in a matter of several months helped neutralize the once powerful Rabaul area. Some attention was also paid to the Japanese Garrison on Bougainville and adjacent islands in their bloody attempts to recapture the Tarakina beach head.

As the Allied drive continued westward the 100th was redesignated as it is now, and by August of 1944 had begun its minimum altitude work which was to be the main forte right up to the end of the war. In August of 1944, the Ground Echelon departed from Stirling Island and arrived at Sansapor, New Guinea on 24th August 1944. The Air Echelon departed Stirling for Hollandia, New Guinea, on 3rd September 1944, where

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it spent several weeks of intensive work on New Guinea targets, and in covering the invasion fleets making for Morotai and Palau invasions. Around the 24th of September the Flight Echelon had rejoined with the Ground Echelon at Sansapor to continue the fight in the productive area of the Netherlands East Indies occupied by Japanese Forces.

These next months had a fast and furious pace with many minimum altitude bombing and strafing missions, shipping searches and numerous other types. The targets other than airfields soon deteriorated, Japanese shipping had contracted markedly to the use of small native type boats. Many targets were at extreme range since they were the only ones worthwhile. In late October began the retaking of the Philippines, and the Squadron staged through for its first help in this matter at the beginning of November 1944. As a sidelight at this time the 100th supported directly the Asia and Mapia Island invasions, these points off N.W. New Guinea being used as spotting points by Japanese Forces.

At the beginning of 1945 the Philippine operations went into high gear along with the stepped up tempo of the Pacific War. The 100th widened its field to include support operations at Cebu City and Zamboanga. The job being done at Sansapor the Flight Echelon departed for Morotai Island on 22nd February 1945 and the Ground Echelon left on 25th February 1945 to arrive at Puerto Princessa on Palawan Island on 15th March 1945, D plus 15 at that last of our war time bases. The Flight Echelon continued operating at Morotai for one month though staging from Leyte for periods of four or five days at a time for the Zamboanga operations. Eventually the Squadron reformed about the 22nd of March and settled down for the last quarter and "Goalpost" operations.

From this last base missions were conducted over the Southern Philippines in the early part, swinging down over the Sulu Archipeligo to Borneo, with direct support under the 13th Fighter Command to Tarakan, Brunei Bay, and Balikpapan invasions. To complete the cycle, several missions were to the South East French Indo China coast, at just about extreme range.

As the strong Allied Forces began closing in for the final assault on Japan proper the 100th Bombardment Squadron (M) was again bundling its belongings together in preparation for the publicly announced joining together of the Far East Air Forces. But the final cataclysmic strokes were too much for the Emperor of Japan, and the rest is now history. There are those who believe that His Highness may have obtained knowledge of the forthcoming visits of the 100th percenters.

Such then is the briefest of outlines of the Squadron's contributions to the effort of eradicating the enemies of our established freedoms. The details are too numerous to be gathered in anything less than a large book but they will be lived over for many a year to come. A thoughtful respect is hereby made to those who made the supreme sacrifice, of which the honor roll of the 100th contains some 55 names. There are others, too, who are listed on other honor rolls, but whose work while with the Squadron is not forgotten.

In conclusion there is a little statistical record to include. In this Pacific operation of World War II the 100th Bombardment Squadron (M) participated in 404 assigned missions involving 2,463 sorties, dropped 3,986,850 pounds of bombs, and expended over three million rounds of ammunition on enemy installations. On the debit side about fifteen planes were lost to combat operations. About 55 men were killed or are missing in action, with 26 having received wounds. Casualties caused the enemy could never be rightfully known. That they are many is self evident.

Of interest to note is that the Squadron underwent some 83 air alerts of varying intensity but suffered not one single casualty from them.

The 100th Bombardment Squadron (M) has been awarded unit battle citations for the Northern Solomons, New Guinea, Southern Philippines and Bismarck Archipeligo Campaigns. At this writing awards have been requested and are pending for participation in the Anti Sub Campaign off the Atlantic coast, the Luzon, China, Western Pacific and Borneo Campaigns. The Philippine Liberation ribbon with one star is also awarded. Commendations are equally numerous.

In the matter of targets attacked in this Air Offensive, a major portion of these were Japanese Airfields, pock-marked from medium altitude bombing, and also bombed and strafed from minimum altitude. Revetments, personnel and supply areas, and the enemy airplanes caught on the ground, all received damaging blows. Shipping

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was sought after, barge hideouts and small ship building industries were attacked. Enemy Radar Stations were endlessly being scanned for. In the latter stages of the war more direct support was given the Allied Invasion Forces and the advancing Forces found considerable evidence of effective work in this softening up process. The demands of some enemy installations required pin point bombing because of the proximity of friendly forces. Smoke screening of landing forces was effectively used and to finish the job even after areas were reoccupied insect spray from planes was called upon. As a sidelight of the softening up work numerous pamphlets prepared by the Psychological Warfare Branch were dropped on both Japanese installations and native villages.

The closing days of the war found the 100th engaged in supporting the Infantry in cleaning up the isolated pockets of Northern Luzon, where the Ground Warfare first started on American territory. On the last day a mission was on its way to the target area with a bomb load, when the base radio flashed the word that the war was officially over, and instructed the crews to salvo their bombs and return home.

The following radiograms are quoted from the Commanding General of the Army Air Forces :

"THE JUNGLE AIR FORCE'S GALLANT BATTLE TO CLEAR THE SKIES FROM THE NEW HERBRIDES, SOLOMONS, ADMIRALTIES, NEW GUINEA, NETHERLANDS INDIES AND PHILIPPINES TO THE ASIATIC COAST CONTRIBUTED GREATLY TO OUR VICTORY OVER THE JAPANESE. ALL USAAF JOIN ME IN HEARTIEST CONGRATULATIONS TO YOU FOR YOUR ILLUSTRIOUS ACHIEVEMENTS AND FIGHTING SPIRIT, TO WHICH WE SO LARGELY OWE TODAY'S SPLENDID TRIUMPH.

ARNOLD"

"UNDER YOUR INSPIRING LEADERSHIP THE FAR EAST AIR FORCES' BRILLIANT OFFENSIVE WAS AN OUTSTANDING FACTOR IN OUR VICTORY OVER THE JAPANESE. WHILE GRAVELY OUTNUMBERED AND UNDERSUPPLIED DURING THE HEROIC OPERATIONS EARLY IN THE WAR, YOU ROSE FROM THE DUST OF THE PORT MORESBY STRIPS TO STOP THE AUSTRALIA BOUND JAP IN HIS TRACKS. ALL THAT YOU HAVE DONE SINCE HAS MADE AIR HISTORY AND IT MAY BE TRUTHFULLY SAID THAT NEVER HAS AN AIR COMMANDER DONE SO MUCH WITH SO LITTLE. THE ARMY AIR FORCES HONOR YOUR FIGHTING SPIRIT AND OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENTS WHICH WERE SO LARGELY RESPONSIBLE FOR TODAY'S GREAT VICTORY.

ARNOLD"

From your Commanding Officer, Captain James K. Clark :

"Your unfailing services and outstanding performance of duty have contributed much to the war record of this organization. In recognition of this I wish to offer my sincere personal thanks and commend you on a job well done. Best wishes to each and every one of you."

THIS WAS YOUR WAR!

This has been prepared by the Intelligence Section of the 100th Bombardment Squadron (M), and is not to be reprinted without proper authority.  
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